

The middle class, whose support of the rioters induced Gen. Swareddahab and the army to depose the 55-year-old president, can be mollified, if not granted the full loaf of democracy it seeks.

Libya and Syria have applauded the coup and would like to claim credit for its success. But it was not Muammar Qaddafi or Hafez Assad who overthrew President Nimeiri. It was his old family friend, fellow Dongola tribesman, brother officer, and co-resident of Omdurman, Gen. Swareddahab.

In this case, as in others, successful coups can be staged only by friends one trusts, not by one's enemies. It is a simple lesson, but one worth learning.

For Gaafar Nimeiri, stranded at Cairo Airport, that knowledge came too late.